

The Episcopal Diocese of Long Island

Bishop's Policy for Missions and Aided Parishes

(Revised 2-10-14)

A. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Mission Congregation:** A Mission Congregation is an unincorporated church, chapel, preaching station or congregation meeting regularly in a particular location and having a regular body of members.
2. **Aided Parish:** An Aided Parish is generally an incorporated or unincorporated church, having a regular congregation, which receives support from the Diocese or is unable to meet its financial obligations, which has applied for such status to seek aid, or an unincorporated church, which has applied for such status, with or without the expectation of subsidy.

B. CLERICAL OVERSIGHT

1. **The Bishop as Rector:** The Bishop is the Rector of all Diocesan Mission Congregations and Aided Parishes.
2. **Vicar:** The vicar is the priest-in-charge having been appointed by the bishop who serves a Mission or Aided Parish at the pleasure of the Bishop and under the bishop's direction. The vicar shall preside at all Bishop's Committee Meetings and the Annual Meeting. For definition of Priest-in-Charge see Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church Title III Canon 9 Section 3.
3. **Clergy Deployment:** All clergy serving Mission Congregations and Aided Parishes are appointed by the Bishop, are accountable to the Bishop, and serve at the Bishop's pleasure. Although not required to do so, the Bishop may give congregations whatever voice in the appointment process the Bishop chooses.
4. **Compensation:** The rate of compensation for all clergy-in-charge appointed by the Bishop and serving any Mission congregations or Aided Parishes shall be established using the guidelines set forth in the Diocesan Base Salary as established by the Diocesan Convention.

C. ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. **Annual Meeting:** Every congregation shall hold an Annual Meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York and the Canons of the Diocese of Long Island. The date of the annual shall be the date set forth on the certificate of incorporation if there be one or as otherwise determined by the bishop if there be none (nb. Most missions will not have a certificate of incorporation. Eligibility of voters and candidates for office shall conform to the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York).

2. ***Nomination Process:*** All Missions and Aided Parishes shall have a bishop's committee. The bishop's committee shall either be appointed by the bishop or may, with the bishop's consent, be elected from within the membership of the congregation in accordance with the rules pertaining to elections as set forth by the Religious Incorporations Law of the State of New York.
3. ***Elections:*** If permitted by the bishop, at the Annual Meeting of a Mission or Aided Parish shall elect two Wardens (one a year in alternating years) and no less than three (3) and no more than six (6) Bishop's Committee members.

D. LOCAL OVERSIGHT

1. ***Bishop's Committee Meetings:*** In addition to The Annual Meeting, Bishop's Committees shall meet bi-monthly. The Vicar shall preside at the Bishop's Committee Meetings.
2. ***Parish By-Laws or Missions:*** All Mission and Aided Parishes shall adopt and adhere to the by-laws established by the Diocese for Missions and Aided Parishes.

E. PROPERTY AND FACILITIES

1. ***Approvals:*** No Mission or Aided Parish may acquire real property or contract for or purchase any renovation or major repair or major construction in excess of \$10,000 of any church building (rectory, church, parish hall) without the approval of the bishop. All proposals for said action shall be presented to the Bishop. At least three sets of bids on equivalent specifications shall be submitted for any construction or renovation and a written plan for the payment of the cost of the project shall also be submitted to the Bishop. All emergency or minor repairs should be undertaken as and when appropriate with notification given to the bishop as soon as it is practicable.
2. ***Signature on Contracts:*** No contract for the purchase of any goods or services the cost of which exceeds \$10,000 shall be signed by the vicar, any warden or member of the bishop's committee without the express prior written consent of the bishop.
3. ***Encumbering Property:*** No Mission or Aided Parish may enter into a lease agreement either as lessor or lessee without consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.
4. ***Maintenance of Property:*** Normal maintenance and minor repairs of church property shall be the responsibility of the Bishop's Committee even when oversight is delegated to a Property Committee.
5. ***Title to Property, Legacies, and Bequests:*** No mission may accept a bequest or legacy of either real or personal property without the consent of the bishop.

F. FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

1. **Treasurer:** A treasurer will be appointed by the Vicar, with the consent of the Bishop's Committee. The Vicar shall in no case serve as the Treasurer of any Mission or Aided Parish.
2. **Support for Common Ministry:** Each congregation shall provide for the payment of its tithes or at the very least an honest proportional offering for the support of the common ministry of the Diocese. These payments shall be made to the Treasurer of the Diocese on a regular monthly basis.
3. **Stewardship Program:** Each congregation shall have an ongoing Stewardship Program under the leadership of the Bishop's Committee and Vicar whose responsibility it will be to plan and execute an appropriate stewardship program, preferably throughout the year.
4. **Diocesan Appeals:** Each congregation will participate in and financially support official Diocesan appeals such as Episcopal Charities to the best of its ability.
5. **Annual Report:** The Annual Report of a Mission Congregations and Aided Parishes shall be submitted each year to the bishop.

G. BUSINESS METHODS

1. **Loans:** No Mission or Aided Parish shall borrow any sum of money without the prior written consent of the bishop.
2. **Business Methods:** All business conducted by any Mission or Aided Parish shall conform to the methods set forth in the *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* as set forth by the National Canons.
3. **Multi-peril Policy:** All Missions and Aided Parishes shall obtain comprehensive liability, property damage, and fire and theft coverage through *Church Insurance Company*. The minimums for such coverages shall for liability insurance be at least \$1M/3M and for fire and extended coverage shall be equal to the last property valuation obtained by said Mission or Aided Parish which valuation must be done every 3 years.



APPENDIX A - Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island
Title IV, Canon 4 – Aided Parishes

SECTION I. Application. A Parish may apply to the Bishop and the Department of Mission to be accepted as an Aided Parish and receive aid from any Diocesan source, missionary or otherwise, provided the Parish is willing to meet the requirements set forth hereafter in this Canon.

SECTION II. Waiver. Such application must be accompanied by a waiver from the Wardens and Vestry of their right to elect a Rector while the Parish is being treated as an Aided Parish, and by an agreement that during that period the Bishop may call upon the Rector, if there be one, or upon their Priest-in-Charge, if the Bishop appoints one, to render such service within and/or without the Aided Parish as the Bishop may, from time to time, direct.

SECTION III. Clergy. The Clergy in charge of an Aided Parish shall be appointed thereto by the Bishop and may be removed by him, acting under Title VI, Canon 3, Section VI, or assigned to other Diocesan work.

SECTION IV. Transfer of Property. An aided Parish shall, at the end of three years, transfer the title of all Real Estate and all Endowment and Trust Funds to the Trustees of the Estate, and such Real Estate, Endowment and Trust Funds shall, for the period the Parish remains an Aided Parish, be administered by the Bishop and the Trustees of the Estate.

SECTION V. Capital Expenditures. Expenditures of any Capital Funds belonging to the Aided Parish shall be made only with the full approval and consent of the Bishop and the Trustees of the Estate.

SECTION VI. Resignations. Upon acceptance as an Aided Parish, the Wardens and Vestrymen shall tender their resignations and may be appointed by the Bishop, together with others if need be, as the Bishop's Committee and such Committee shall, with the Bishop's consent, appoint a Treasurer and a Clerk and such other officers as may be required.

SECTION VII. Policies. All policies applicable to Mission congregations shall apply to an Aided Parish.

SECTION VIII. Petition to Revert. If the Aided Parish shall petition to revert to its former status, the Bishop shall call a Special Meeting of the Congregation for the purpose of electing a Vestry which shall, in turn, take the necessary Canonical steps for the election of a Rector.

SECTION IX. Properties on Reversion. If an Aided Parish reverts to its former status, it may petition the Trustees of the Estate for a conveyance of its Real Estate and the return of its Endowment and Trust Funds, and upon such petition being received, the said Trustees shall forthwith convey its said Real Estate and Return its said Endowment and Trust Funds.